Letter from New York

Marina Oswald

BOOK WORLD, OCTO 30, 1977

Marina Oswald Porter

by Leonore Fleischer

SPEAKING OF PRESENCE, the Russian-born widow of Lee Harvey Oswald had no reason to apologize as she did for her "poor English" at the press conference held for her and Priscilla Johnson McMillan by Harper & Row. In the face of questions coming at her from all sides, some of them hostile, Marina Oswald Porter was articulate, sincere, thoughtful and calm, holding firmly to her belief that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone to assassinate John F. Kennedy.

Afterwards, at a small luncheon held in her honor and Mrs. McMillan's, she said, "I felt as though the ants were crawling all over me. I said to myself, 'I'm not going to faint. I'm not going to faint.'" The book that occasioned both press conference and luncheon is *Marina and Lee*, a double psychological portrait by Mrs. McMillan, who spent 13 years researching and writing it.

A number of reprint editors attended the news conference as spectators, since the paperback rights will not be auctioned until some time after October 26. There are already 42,500 copies in print before publication, and the book has a $225,000 floor bid for reprint rights, which means the auction begins with that figure. In the face of the courage and dignity Marina has displayed, it would be nice to think that some measure of prosperity awaits her, to repay her in part for her years spent as another victim of the Kennedy tragedy.